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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCHAR 00209 171524Z

45
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-11 SS-20 DRC-01 RSC-01 AEC-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7460

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 0209

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BEXP, BTRA, TECH, RO
SUBJ: GENERAL ELECTRIC EAST EUROPE FORUM:
NUCLEAR ENERGY

REFS: (A) BUCHAREST 0207, (B) BUCHAREST 0194,
(C) BUCHAREST 0003

1. DURING DISCUSSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY TOPIC, INCLUDED AS PART OF GE/GOR MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING (REF A), GE REPS MADE CLEAR TO ROMANIANS THAT THEY THOUGH LATTER WERE MAKING A MISTAKE IN GOING THE HEAVY WATER ROUTE--BASED ON NATURAL URANIUM--IN THEIR NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM RATHER THAN DEVELOPING LIGHT WATER TECHNOLOGY WHICH IS PREVAILING WORLD TREND. GE ARGUED, IN PARTICULAR, THAT CONCENTRATION ON HEAVY WATER SYSTEM WOULD REDUCE ROMANIAN EXPORT POSSIBILITIES ONCE INDUSTRY WAS DEVELOPED IN 1980'S (FIRST POWER STATION BEING COMPLETED WITH SOVIET HELP WILL BE READY ABOUT 1981).

2. DURING LUNCH, WHEN DISCUSSION RESUMED, MANEA MANESCU TOLD CHARGE ON SIDE THAT ROMANIAN DECISON TO FOLLOW HEAVY WATER ROUTE WAS BASED ALMOST SOLELY ON "ROMANIAN DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE," RATHER THAN PURELY ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS.

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PAGE 02 BUCHAR 00209 171524Z

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MANESCU DID NOT ELUCIDATE, THIS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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STATEMENT WOULD SEEM TO IMPLY ROMANIAN CONFIDENCE THAT IT HAS SUFFICIENT URANIUM-MINING POTENTIAL TO SUSTAIN ITS HEAVY WATER OPTION. CHARGE ALSO NOTED RECENT PRESS ARTICLES ON PROGRAM FOR MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OIL SHALE IN THE BANAT FOR USE IN THERMAL POWER STATIONS, AND SUGGESTED TO MANESCU THAT THIS DECISION MIGHT ALSO HAVE BEEN TAKEN FOR SAKE OF REDUCING DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN ENERGY SOURCES; POINT WAS READILY AGREED TO BY MANESCU.
MARTENS

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